

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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For Release to PM's November 12, 1966

REMARKS OF JACK H. BERRYMAN, CHIEF, DIVISION OF WILDLIFE SERVICES,
BUREAU OF SPORT FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTERIOR, AT THE 63rd ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE WYOMING WOOL GROWERS
ASSOCIATION, CASPER, WYOMING, NOVEMBER 12, 1966

Philosophy, Ethics, Morals and Technology -- Their
Impact on Animal Damage Control

As a westerner, and having spent the earlier years of my career on range work in Utah, I am very pleased to be back in this rugged country and again to have the privilege of visiting in Wyoming and also in Colorado in connection with this trip. While working out of the Bureau's regional office in Albuquerque over a dozen years ago, it was my pleasure, on several occasions, to tour Wyoming and become partially familiar with your resources and some of the problems associated with their management.

Others on the panel will cover the local, state and regional situation and present various viewpoints. It is my purpose to add the national perspective and to take this opportunity to set the record straight on several misunderstandings that have occurred among the Bureau, the wool growers and other land users regarding animal control. Primarily, I want to talk about the morals, ethics, philosophy and technology of animal control, and how these relate to the day-to-day immediate problems with which we are mutually concerned.

At first glance, this may seem rather far afield to those of you who are daily concerned with animal depredations and with your individual and industry incomes. It would seem that I might be talking from "Cloud Nine". Not so. The ethics, morals and philosophy of animal control are very concrete and have had a direct bearing on decisions during recent years. It may not seem appropriate to stress ethics and morals when you must go from this meeting to meet your payrolls, pay your bills and plan for the future. Your concern is with mill levies, the number of marketable lambs, carrying capacity, nutrition and disease, and predation.

But it is appropriate and important, to recognize that philosophy, ethics and morals affect in one way or another every one of our daily decisions as resource users.

We are living in a new era; in a new climate of public opinion. A more alert and responsive public demands a more sensitive attitude on the part of all resource users and the various agencies charged with resource management. We are now as never before, challenged with evaluating all aspects of resource use. These include the total environment and the many problems with which we are now confronted, among which are soil, water and air pollution, and the social values of all living creatures -- including the coyote and prairie dog, as well as the condor and the whooping crane.

The future role of this Bureau will depend upon our ability to meet the challenge of discharging our responsibilities in a rapidly changing time. The same can be said of your own industry. Each of us will have to weigh many factors in trying to reach the best-balanced judgments. The days of the "purist protectionists" and the "resource exploiter" are gone. The public demands an equitable distribution or allocation of resource utilization. This Bureau's position is extremely important to you as well as to the conservationist groups. We cannot waver with temporal breezes and ignore your urgent needs, but neither can we ignore well founded public sentiment. We would do a disservice to everyone -- if we allow ourselves to be carried away during a period of emotionalism, and to heel and tack with each criticism, news story, or other pressures with which we are confronted.

As a Bureau we must set a course based on the best factual information available, bringing into account every factor while making our decisions, and chart and travel a course on which all can depend. This is no small chore; it taxes our abilities and intelligence to the utmost. Nevertheless this is the course we have set, and total consideration is the guiding influence in every decision, whether it relates to a single coyote getter, the move of a field assistant, or a major change in national policy.

In discussing morals, ethics and technology, I want to draw upon some of the comments of Navy Vice Admiral H. G. Rickover made at the Athens meeting of the Royal National Foundation at Athens, Greece, on June 2 of this year. Science has shown the way to destroy any form of animal or plant life, and has taught us many facts about our environment and its interrelationships; yet, we have a long way to go in understanding total relationships -- one to another. To the scientific knowledge available to use, we must add appropriate sociological and economic factors before arriving at decisions. Quite obviously, certain applications of our knowledge can injure man, society and nature. This must be avoided.

If we are realistic and honest with ourselves, we must be humbled by the fact that we are making decisions that can determine the fate of an industry, of a species of an animal, or the environment in which we live and, of which we are a part -- and, on which future generations must depend. I don't believe it is too much to say this is an awesome responsibility.

All endeavor must conform to the most basic of all human laws, the maxim of "mutuality of liberty", the principle that one man's liberty of action ends where it would injure another. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that we must give careful thought to the long range and public consequences of our actions, and guarantee the long-range benefit of our resources for society as a whole.

Dr. Stanley A. Cain, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, speaking before the 17th International Horticultural Congress at the University of Maryland, August 19, 1966, expressed the hope that the recent recognition of the total environment concept would receive unanimous support by the public and private institutions. In an earlier address, at Falmouth, Massachusetts, on August 11, 1966, he pointed out that we live in a period of trite definitions and catch phrases, one of the oldest being "Conservation is the use and management of natural resources for the greatest good of the most people over the longest time", frequently abbreviated to "Conservation is the wise use of natural resources". The problem lies in determining what is the "greatest good" when faced with alternate "goods" and the question remains unanswered because the phrase does not define "wisdom".

It is against this philosophical, moral, and aesthetic background that we have made certain policy changes. As policy decisions are made I think it appropriate that they be discussed with you who are directly affected by such decisions. Let me cite some examples of particular interest in Wyoming and over the West as a whole.

We have advised our personnel that they shall not "solicit" or "drum up business" in animal control. This has been interpreted by some as a gag, smothering the rapport between our personnel and the land users. No such prohibition has been implied or intended. Our personnel are free to discuss problems, program needs, and program goals with cooperators; in fact, it is expected that they do so. I think you will agree that no unit of the Federal government has any business in "empire building".

We are a service agency, making our services available when and where needed. We do not need to "beat the drums" for increased

business and we shall not do so. If our program cannot stand on its own merits and if it is not truly needed, it should go by the board. We have no business promoting control where it is not needed, but we do have a responsibility for controlling animal numbers when needed and we do not intend to shirk that responsibility. This is in keeping with the philosophical climate that prevails today.

In August of 1965, we placed the control of mountain lion and bear on a corrective rather than a preventive basis. In May of this year, we further strengthened that policy by requiring a written justification or reason for every bear and lion taken. This was not in any sense of the word to curtail needed bear and lion control. It simply required that simple reasons be given for taking these animals. There was an immediate public and political response, but the policy remains unchanged. It is not unreasonable to ask why it was necessary to remove one of our larger carnivores. If the need can't be shown, the animal or animals should be left alone. This is an indication of our determination to protect the livestock industry as well as to accommodate other conservation interests -- not to mention the important matter of conserving a resource.

We have restricted the use of certain toxic materials. We have not abandoned their use; in fact, we intend to use them more effectively; however, only when necessary and with utmost caution.

We are very much concerned with "do-it-yourself control" especially where extremely toxic compounds are involved. We use thallium only under the most unusual circumstances. Our use of 1080, perhaps our most valuable control tool, is governed by rigid regulations and guidelines.

When techniques are misused or are used indiscriminately, they endanger the entire control effort and place all of us in a bad public light. The ultimate result might well be restrictive legislation, to the detriment of the livestock industry. We strongly urge that the wool growers, and for that matter, other organized user groups assume a role of leadership in exercising discretion in animal control.

We are bearing down hard in our search for control techniques which are compatible with the need to keep in tune with nature. Our efforts with the chemo-sterilants for coyote control are well known. But, we are pressing on relentlessly to uncover similar, and perhaps more effective and safer means.

The livestock producers of the western states had hoped that the \$200,000 added to the Bureau's budget by the Congress for predatory animal control would be used exclusively for the reemployment of field personnel or trappers. This would not be to your, or to our interest, nor is this the way the money has been allocated. We believe there are other more effective and enduring ways of strengthening the program now, and in the years ahead.

Trapping is the most ancient of man's techniques for capturing animals and in some cases it remains one of the most efficient. The employment of additional field assistants, the trappers, is not the only answer to an improved job. Our concept of mobile forces or flying squads concentrates the right talent at the right place and at the right time to quickly alleviate a critical situation. Funds have been set aside for this purpose.

We have not been taking full advantage of the selective and effective technique of aerial hunting, although it has been employed rather widely here in Wyoming. We have set aside additional funds for this purpose.

A major portion of the additional funds will go for the employment of professionally trained field assistants, not only to meet immediate field and trapline needs, but to develop a reserve of trained personnel with the capabilities for acquiring new skills and assuming increased supervisory responsibility.

To many persons, continued education and training is a frosting or worse, a waste of time. This is not true in our view. We are proud of our field personnel, but we are convinced that there is not a man among us who cannot improve his know-how and consequently his ability to do a better job. Especially in this rapidly changing world, it is vital that we stay current with the latest techniques. Accordingly, funds have been set aside for training purposes and we believe the result will be more immediate than you might suspect.

We are making a determined effort to work more closely with you and other cooperators, and with responsible resource management agencies to bring to bear on our conduct of the animal control program as much collective thinking and talent as possible. The meetings held last month here in Wyoming involving many interested groups and agencies is an outstanding example of getting together to outline a program that will meet your needs and at the same time be acceptable to the many other interests involved. We think that only good can come from this type of approach, and this is one of the essential steps in applying ethics and morals to our application of scientific technology.

In conclusion, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of the Interior intend to fully discharge our animal control responsibilities.

We are daily reminded most forcibly that coyotes are killing lambs in New Mexico, that blackbirds are eating corn in Ohio, that prairie dogs are transmitting plague in several western states. It is also brought to our attention and with equal force that our wildlife must be protected, that indiscriminate control will not be tolerated, that the ferret, the condor, and the grizzly bear must not pass from the American scene.

We live in a changing time, with a changing set of social values and it becomes our mutual responsibility to recognize these and to arrive intelligently at decisions that are mutually acceptable.

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